aggregate professional talent of Ipswich at five pound five!!! It staggers you—I vouch for its truth. The end is of course in view from that hour. The advertisements appear—are laughed at—denounced—scouted; read, listened to, and for various reasons answered. The committee meet. They consult, and after a week's grave deliberation they select (remember "my son and his majority"). Well, and who, suppose you, is the fortunate individual. You cannot guess. These things are of course so uncertain. It is the best design of course, and may be from the man in the moon. Well—wonders will *not* cease. In this instance singular coincidence! *the* man turns out to be no other than the very artchitec, the man of planes and chisels, the heaven-taught member of the profession. Yes, he made the first plan. He said, "five pound five" was the "wally" of the article, and he's *won* it.

Anon—that is, in Saturday's Journal, you shall hear what occurred at the public meeting which followed. Suffice it now to say they accepted the plan. I feel I have occupied too much of your space, and therefore hastily subscribe myself an

UNWILLING SPECTATOR OF THESE DOINGS.

Ipswich, 16th March, 1847.

YEOVIL TOWN-HALL COMPETITION.

SIR,—Your columns of the 20th ult. contained an advertisement for designs for the above building. I applied for the particulars, the terms of which, as they are no doubt known to many of your readers, I will not trouble you with; but a circular I have to-day received is so rich a specimen of its class, that I cannot resist forwarding it to you, with my rejoinder. Your present notice of this affair will effect far more good than the insertion of a score of complaints made to you, as they generally are, *after the competition has been settled*: and the only parties in power are the committee, who have obtained the designs required.

For my own part, I cannot blame these gentlemen at Yeovil at all. How can they be supposed to know intuitively what is due to architects on such occasions? It is exceedingly natural for them to squeeze as much as possible from the competing parties, who, good souls, seem so silently patient of their yoke. Finding that such terms as these *drawe* designs, porterage, postage, post-office orders, *et cetera, et cetera, et cetera*—who knows but more daring spirits ("Special commissioners" yet unborn) may advertise for designs to be submitted carriage free, with a ton of slates, or a few loads of timber *gratis*, from each delighted competitor?

Architects have no one else to thank for this state of things but themselves: its cure most assuredly rests *with them*. If they would but *themselves* dictate, and insist on terms with advertising parties, *previous* to submitting designs for public structures, they might considerably ameliorate, if not altogether reform the system, of architectural competition; a thing most excellent in itself, to which the public are mainly indebted for such beautiful modern edifices as we have, and the profession (albeit it is now most grievously taxed for it) the well-merited distinction of some of its gifted members.

I am, Sir, &c., WILLIAM YOUNG.

London, March 11, 1847.

Yeovil, March 10th, 1847.

SIR,—I beg to inform you that at a meeting of the special commissioners held this day, the time for receiving plans was extended to the 29th instant, from such architects as shall deliver their plans to me, free of postage, on that day, accompanied with a post-office order for 5s. payable to me, to meet the extra expenses.—I am, Sir, &c., J. T. VINING, Clerk.

The reply was "I am obliged to you for the promptness with which you have replied to my inquiries; but having just received your printed circular of the last resolutions of the special commissioners, must beg to decline competing, in a case where architectural competition is evidently considered a boon to the profession not to the public."

We have received copies of this circular from seven other quarters with similar expressions.

Since the above was set up, we have had intimation that Mr. Vining has written to say he will "waive the payment."

THE BOND QUESTION.

SIR,—I was much interested by Mr. James Wylson's account, in your last number, of certain experiments instituted by Mr. T. U. Walter, of Philadelphia, regarding the expansion of iron in thick walls. But although these experiments seem to prove what, with some reservation, I ventured to doubt, viz. that stone and mortar, or brick and mortar, do somewhat impede the transmission of heat (or in other words, that these substances are slower conductors of caloric than I had supposed), I still deem it very probable that when such walls as our present fashionable walls,—and which are not quite "5 feet 5 inches thick,"—become so perfectly dry that cold is no longer produced in them by the evaporation of their aqueous matter, iron would eventually acquire the same temperature as the atmosphere surrounding them.

The ingenious experiments of Mr. Walter should be tried, therefore, on walls of such thickness as those in which iron bund is now commonly employed.—I am, Sir, &c.,

March 10th, 1847. W. BROMLT.

SIR,—As a great deal has lately been said respecting the use of iron and wood bond in buildings, I am induced to follow your correspondent, "A Builder," at page 67 of your valuable journal: and, like him, I advocate the use of wood bond, but not cut to the size mentioned in the requisition to the referees, quoted in your leading article of Jan. 23rd;—as no practical man would ever be found so foolish as to use bond timber 4 inches by 4 inches, knowing it would not range with his regular course of brick in thickness, and he would be obliged to cut one inch off the course of brick immediately above the bond.* As bricks are but 2¼ inches thick, if bond timber is cut full 3 inches thick, and laid on the wall *without any mortar*, it will never move from where it is laid, let what may be fixed to it; but it is a well-known fact among practical men, that when bond is laid in mortar, as soon as you begin to fix to it, it becomes loose, and it is the same with wood bricks; not one in fifty is fit to fix to, and the workman is obliged to wedge his bond and bricks before he can fix to them. And in fresh brickwork, by driving one wedge, you disturb at least from four to six bricks, but if bond is cut full 3 inches by 4½ of good oak, instead of the rubbish that is too often used, we shall hear no more complaints of the use of bond timber in buildings, and all the hoop iron in England will never equal it.

I am, Sir, &c., GEO. CLARK.

March 9th.

* This scantling, in the requisition in question, referred to *plates*, not bond.—ED.

BUILDERS AND ARCHITECTS.

SIR,—In your article of last week, with reference to "the profession of the architect," you advocate that in all cases of alterations or improvements an architect should be employed, for the benefit of the builder and his employer; "And to discriminate between the profession of architecture and the trade of building, we conceive to be alike important to the interests of both, though not usually so considered as regards the latter. The builder may otherwise so readily be under an accusation of having magnified the amount, or, to increase his profits, of having executed his work in an inferior manner, that it cannot but be his interest to relieve himself from such imputations." In these remarks I certainly agree; and if the architects would act honourably to the builders, most decidedly it would be to their interest to recommend, in all cases, the employment of architects; but I am sorry to say there is not that unanimous feeling existing. For example, a gentleman or tradesman is about to make extensive alterations in his house or premises. He has a builder, who has done business for him for years, and whom he has found, after years of experience, to be an honourable straightforward tradesman, and in whose hands he feels perfectly satisfied in placing the execution of his work, even without any contract whatever. Now, would it be to the interest of that man to recommend the employment of an architect? Most certainly not; not from any sordid or selfish motives; not from any feeling that his work would be under the supervision of that architect, and he would not be able to "magnify" his works and "increase his profits," or use materials that would best suit his purpose: I say not from any such views as these, but from the following cause:—

Suppose he recommends an architect to be employed, what is the architect's first step after the drawings have been approved? Why he puts the following question:—"Do you mean to employ Mr. —— for these works? I should recommend you to put this job up for tender; you will get it done for 400*l.* or 1,000*l.* (as the case may be) less than if you leave it to Mr. ——. Allow me to make out a specification, and I know men that will be glad to put in for it."* Well what is the result. Why sir, the man who has done the work for years, and done it too with the strictest honour and integrity (for there are still in the world men of honour, in whom every confidence may be placed), is defrauded of his job by some scamp, or one who never pays for his material, and calls his creditors together in a few years afterwards, and he probably loses the general yearly work also, because the employer now thinks him a dear man.

Why should not the architect be content with seeing *justice* done to his employer, without robbing the tradesman of his custom? but at the present time justice will not content them. Competition and tendering is their motto, and never until they give that up, and allow the fair tradesman a fair price, will there be a friendly feeling existing between the generality of builders and architects.—I am, Sir, &c.,

S. J. K.

* Our correspondent is dealing with exceptions, not the rule.

FOREIGN ARCHITECTURAL AND COLLATERAL INTELLIGENCE.

Paris City Improvements.—A Strong Pull, a Long Pull, and a Pull Altogether.—The corporation of Paris have an annual income of from forty-six to forty-eight millions of francs—of which *ten* are always fluent and available for structural *improvements*. Some debts, however, have been previously contracted, the amortization of which had to finish in 1852. A constant struggle between quick and slow (reformatory) movements had been carried on for years, until the lord mayor proposed of late to make one final, great attempt at reform, and to borrow for this purpose twenty-five millions of francs more. The question now, however, assumes two different aspects. By contracting this loan (to begin with the *negative* of the case), the amortization of the debt of the city of Paris is prorogued until the year 1858, which will cause that inconvenience, that the great reform of the *octroi* (excise and other duties) will be also necessarily delayed. His lordship has, however, on the other hand, laid a magnificent plan of new structural reforms before the corporation, which, albeit the expense be great, viz., seventy-two millions of francs, will make a clear sweep of most of the hitherto drawbacks on the salubrity and picturesque aspect of Paris. Amongst these plans is another market-place, instead of that "*des Innocens*," at the cost of twenty millions of francs. This is considered an improvement most essential and sanatory. The city payments towards replacing the present opera-house are put down at four millions, as the corporation wishes that the new building be erected between the Palais Royal and the Place du Carousel, which would lead necessarily to a prolongation of the Rue Rivoli, for which sake a nasty nest of lanes and houses is to be purchased and pulled down. The next items to be defrayed from the proposed loan, are the building of the *gothic* church of St. Clotilde on the Place Belle Chasse, valued at three millions,—a new *hospital* at six millions; the remaining sum going towards the enlargement and cutting of new streets.

The Prussian Houses of Parliament.—The expedition with which the late constitution was published, made the adoption of some temporary *locale* necessary, and H. M. the king has now approved the plans and drawings submitted to him. The two houses will meet, for the opening festival, and subsequent business of this session, in the White Hall (*Weisse Saal*) of the royal palace. The throne will be situate in the middle of the back *longitudinal* wall, at whose side will be the ministerial benches, and beside them the seats for the

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